

I claim:

1. A paper medium carrying a steganographic message, the steganographic message including printer control information related to the paper medium that is readable by a machine from an image captured of at least a portion of the paper medium,
5 and that is operable to control a printer so as to optimize print quality for the paper medium.
2. The paper medium of claim 1 wherein the printer control information includes one or more identifiers that are used to look up printer control information used to
10 optimize printer operation for the paper medium.
3. The paper medium of claim 1 wherein the printer control information includes paper characteristics information of the paper medium.
4. The paper medium of claim 1 wherein the steganographic message is encoded
15 in a digital watermark.
5. The paper medium of claim 4 wherein the digital watermark is embedded on the paper medium using an invisible ink.
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6. The paper medium of claim 4 wherein the digital watermark is repeated throughout at least a portion of the paper medium.
7. A printer system comprising:
25 an image sensor for capturing an image of print media;
a steganographic decoder for reading a steganographic message from the image of the print media, the message including printer control information for optimizing printer operation for the print media; and

a printer control unit in communication with the decoder for receiving the printer control information and using the information to optimize printer operation for the print media.

5 *Sub 57* 8. The system of claim 7 wherein the image sensor is part of a scanning subsystem in a multifunction device having a printing subsystem and a scanning subsystem.

9. The system of claim 7 wherein the image sensor comprises a CCD array.

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10. The system of claim 7 wherein the printer control unit uses the printer control information to look up operating parameters used to control the operation of a printer.

15 11. The system of claim 7 including a computer connected to a printer; wherein the decoder comprises program code executing on the computer.

12. The system of claim 7 wherein the decoder comprises a watermark decoder.

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Sub 57 13. A method for adapting operation of a printer to a type of print media comprising:

capturing an image of at least a portion of a print media;

steganographically decoding a message from the image, including printer control information; and

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using the printer control information to adapt operation of the printer to the type of print media.

Sub 57

14. The method of claim 13 wherein steganographically decoding includes decoding the message from a watermark embedded in the print media.

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